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A
TRUE COPY
OF THE
PETITION

OF THE
GENTLEWOMEN,
and Tradesmens-Wives in and about
the City of LONDON.

Delivered,
To the Honourable, the KNIGHTS,
Citizens, and Burgeses, of the House of COM-
MONS in Parliament, the 4th, of
February, 1641.

Together,
With the *Reasons* why their Sex ought thus to Peti-
tion, as well as the Men; and the manner how both
their Petition and Reasons was delivered.

Likewise the Answer which the Honourable Assem-
bly sent to them by Mr. Pym, as they stood at
the House-doore.

Whereunto is added the Prophecie of old Sybilla.

LONDON.
Printed for John Bull, dwelling in Grubstreet. 1641.



TO
THE HONOURABLE
 Knights, Citizens, and Burgesſes,
 of the Houſe of COMMONS aſſem-
 bled in PARLIAMENT.

The moſt humble PETITION of the
 Gentlewomen, Tradeſ-mens-wives, and
 many others of the *Femall Sex*, all Inhabitants of
 the City of LONDON, and the Suburbs thereof.

With loweſt ſubmiſſion ſhewing,

THat we alſo with all thankfull humilty acknow-
 ledging the unwearied paines, care, and great
 charge, beſides hazard of health and life, which
 you the noble Worthies of this Honourable and
 Renowned Aſſembly have undergone, for ſate-
 tie both of *Church and Common-wealth*, for a long time al-
 ready paſt: for which not only we your humble Petitioners,
 and all well affected in this Kingdome, but alſo all other good
 Chriſtians are bound, now, and at all times, to acknowledge;
 yet notwithstanding that many worthy deeds have been done
 by you, great danger and feare doe ſtill attend us, and will, as
 long as Popiſh Lords and Superſtitious Biſhops are ſuffered
 to have their Voice in the Houſe of Peeres, and that accuſed

and abominable Idole of the *Masse* suffered in the Kingdome, and that Arch-enemy of our Prosperity and Reformationly-eth in the Tower, yet not receiving his deserved punishment,

All these under correction, gives us great cause to suspect, that God is angry with us, and to be the chiefe causes, why your Pious endeavours for a further Reformation, proceedeth not with that successe as you desire, & is most earnestly praied for, of all that wish well to true Religion, and the flourishing both of King and Kingdome; the insolencies of the Papists and their Abbettors, raiseth a just feare and suspition of sowing sedition, and breaking out into bloody persecution in this Kingdome, as they have done in *Ireland*, the thoughts of which sad and Barbarous events, maketh our tender hearts to melt within us, forcing us humbly to Petition to this Honourable Assembly, to make safe provision for your selves and us, before it be too late.

And whereas we, whose hearts have joynd cheerefully with all those Petitions which have bin exhibited unto you in the behalfe of the purity of Religion, and the liberty of our Husbands persons and estates, recounting our selves to have an interest in the common priviledges with them, doe with the same confidence assure our selves to finde the same gracious acceptance with you, for easing of those greevances, which in regard of our fraile condition, do more neerely concerne us, & do deeply terrifie our soules: our Domestical dangers with which this kingdom is so much distracted, especially growing on us from those trecherous and wicked attempts already are such, as we find our selves to have as deep a share as any other.

We cannot but tremble at the very thoughts of the horrid and hideous facts, which modestly forbids us now to name, occasioned by the bloody Wars in *Germany*, his Majesties late Northern Army, how often did it affright our hearts, whilst their violence began to breake out so furiously upon the persons of those, whose Husbands or Parents were not able to rescue: we with we had no cause to speak of those insolencies, and savage usage and unheard of rapes, exercised upon our Sex in *Ireland*, and have we not just cause to feare they will prove the forerunners of our name, except Almighty God by the wisdom & care of this *Parliament* be pleased to succour us,

GUILDHALL
LONDON

(3)

our Husbands and Children, which are as deere and tender unto us, as the lives and bloud of our hearts, to see them murdered and mangled and cut in pieces before our eyes, to see our Children dashed against the stones, and the Mothers milk mingled with the Infants bloud, running downe the streets; to see our Houses on flaming fire over our heads: Oh how dreadfull would this bee! wee thought it misery enough (though nothing to that wee have iust cause to feare) but few years since for some of our Sex, by uniuſt diuisions from their bosom comforts, to be rendred in a manner Widdowes, and the children Fatherlesse, Husbands were imprisoned from the Society of their Wives, even against the Lawes of God and Nature, and little Infants suffered in their Fathers banishments: thousands of our deereſt friends have bin compelled to fly from Episcopall persecutions into desert places amongst wilde Beasts, there finding more fauour then in their native soile, and in the midst of all the sorrowes, such hath the pittie of the Prelates beene, that our cries could never enter into their eares or hearts, nor yet through multitudes of obstructions could never have accesse or come nigh to those Royall mercies of our most gracious Soveraigne, which wee confidently hope, would have relieved us: but after all these pressures ended, we humbly signifie, that our present feares are, that unlesse the bloud-thirsty faction of the Papists and Prelates be hindred in their designes, our selves here in *England* as well as they in *Ireland*, shall bee exposed to that misery which is more intollerable then that which is already past, as namely to the rage not of men alone, but of Devils incarnate, (as we may so say) besides the thraldome of our soules and consciences in matters concerning God, which of all things are most deare unto us.

Now the remembrance of all these fearefull accidents aforementioned, doe strongly move us from the example of the Woman of *Tekoa* to fall submissively at the feete of his Majesty, our dread Soveraigne, and cry *Helpe O King*, helpe O yee the noble Worthies now sitting in *Parliament*. And wee humbly beseech you, that you will bee a meanes to his Majesty and the House of *Peeres*, that they will bee pleased to take our heart breaking grievances into timely

consideration, and to adde strength and encouragement to your noble indeavours, and further that you would move his Majesty with our humble requests, that hee would bee graciously pleased according to the example of the good King *Asa*, to purge both the Court and Kingdome of that great Idolatrous service of the Masse, which is tolerated in the Queenes Court, this sinne (as wee conceive,) is able to draw downe a greater curse upon the whole Kingdome, then all your noble and pious indeavours can prevent, which was the cause that the good and pious King *Asa* would not suffer Idolatry in his owne Mother, whole example if it shall please his Majesties gracious goodnesse to follow, in putting downe Popery and Idolatry both in great and small, in Court and in the Kingdome throughout, to subdue the Papists and their abettors, and by taking away the power of the Prelates, whose Government by long and wofull experience wee have found to bee against the liberty of our conscience and the freedome of the Gospell, and the sincere profession and practise thereof, then shall our feares bee removed, and wee may expect that God will powre downe his blessings in abundance both upon his Majesty, and upon this Honourable Assembly, and upon the whole Land.

For which your new Petitioners shall pray affectionately.

The Reasons follow.

IT may bee thought strange, and unbecoming our sex to shew ourselves by way of Petition to this Honourable Assembly: but the matter being rightly considered, of the right and interest wee have in the Common and publique cause of the Church, it will, as wee conceive (under correction) bee found a duty commanded and required.

First, Because *Christ* hath purchased us at as deare a rate as hee hath done men, and therefore requirith the like obedience for the same mercy, as of men.

Secondly, Because in the free enjoying of *Christ* in his owne Lawes, and a flourishing estate of the Church and Common-wealth, consisteth the happinesse of Women as well as Men.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Because Women are sharers in the Common calamities that accompany both Church and Commonwealth, when oppression is exercised over the Church or Kingdome wherein they live; and an unlimited power have beene given to Prelates to exercise authority over the Consciences of Women, as well as Men; witnesse Newgate, Smithfield, and other places of persecution, wherein Women as well as Men have felt the smart of their fury.

Neither are wee left without example in Scripture, for when the State of the Church, in the time of King *Asane-
rus* was by the bloody enemies thereof sought to bee utterly destroyed, wee find that *Ester* the Queene and her Maids fasted and prayed, and that *Ester* petitioned to the King in the behalfe of the Church: and though shee enterprised this duty with the hazard of her owne life, being contrary to the Law to appeare before the King before she were sent for, yet her love to the Church carried her thorow all difficulties, to the performance of that duty.

On which grounds wee are imboldned to present our humble Petition unto this Honourable Assembly, not weighing the reproaches which may and are by many cast upon us, who (not well weighing the premises) scoffe and deride our good intent. Wee doe it not out of any selfe conceit, or pride of heart, as seeking to equall our selves with Men, either in Authority or wisdom: But according to our places to discharge that duty wee owe to God, and the cause of the Church, as farre as lieth in us, following herein the example of the Men, which have gone in this duty before us.

A Relation of the manner how it was delivered, with their Answer, sent by Mr. Pym.

THis Petition with their Reasons was delivered the fourth of Feb. 1641. by *Mistresse Anne Stagg* a Gentlewoman and *Brewer's-wife*, and many others with her of like rank
and

and quality, which when they had delivered it, after some time spent in reading of it, the Honourable Assembly sent them an Answer by Master Pym, which was performed in this manner.

Master Pym came to the Commons doore, and called for the Women, and spake unto them in these words: Good Women, your Petition and the Reasons have beene read in the House; and is very thankfully accepted of, and is come in a seasonable time: You shall (God willing) receive from us all the satisfaction which wee can possibly give to your just and lawfull desires. Wee intreat you to repaire to your Houses, and turne your Petition which you have delivered here, into Prayers at home for us; for wee have beene, are, and shall bee (to our utmost power) ready to relieve you, your Husbands, and Children, and to performe the trust committed unto us, towards God, our King and Countrey, as becometh faithfull Christians and Loyall Subjects.

LONDON.

The Prophecie of old Sybilla,
Which secretly shee told Tom Milla.

When Scotlands hundreth and ninth unconquered King,
The sixteen hundred, thirty and ninth yeare,
Into his age of thirty nine shall Raigne,
Then shall the Papall overthrow appeare,
Which all the Arts of Europe shall admire:
For Scotland shall that blessed worke begin,
Then shall the Whore of Babell, wee had here,
Bee banisht quite, which Bishops did bring in,
Then thou brave England which was led so blind,
By their perverse Episcopapall pride,
And Irelands shamelesse superstitious sinne,
Shall bee suppress't, who cruelly have cride;
So shalt, our sacred Prophetesse Sybilla,
Shall shortly come to passe, shee tels Tom Milla;
And Tom tels mee, and I must tel't againe,
Through Scotland, England, Ireland, France and Spaine;

F I N I S,

